

**KEY TO ECOLOGICAL SITES
MLRA 43B – CENTRAL ROCKY MOUNTAINS
ZONE 1 – 20+” HIGH MOUNTAINS (20+M)**

- 1. Site in a lowland position that receives significant additional moisture from runoff of adjacent slopes or from intermittent/perennial streams or a water table (*HIGH Productivity Potential*).....**Group I**
- 1. Upland site that does not receive additional moisture as above.....2
 - 2. Soil depth very shallow (<10”), shallow (10-20”) OR moderately deep to deep (>20”) reacting like shallow soils due to root restrictive layer or on south and west facing slopes (*LOW productivity potential*).....**Group II**
 - 2. Soil depth moderately deep to deep (>20”) without root restricting layer that inhibits the productivity potential**Group III**

GROUP I – Sites that Receive Additional Moisture

- 1. Site poorly drained with water table above ground surface part of growing season, Nebraska sedge, water sedge, and willows common species.....**Wetland (WL)**
- 1. Sites without water table above ground surface for part of growing season...2
 - 2. Water table within rooting depth of herbaceous species (typically above 20”) during part of the growing season, tufted hairgrass, shrubby cinquefoil, blue wildrye, sedges, rushes, and willows common.....**Subirrigated (Sb)**
 - 2. Site receives periodic overflow from adjacent slopes, but without a water table within rooting depth of woody plants, and soil textures are loamy, silver sagebrush, snowberry, slender wheatgrass, and blue wildrye common.....**Overflow (Ov)**

GROUP II – Upland Sites that are Very Shallow (<10”) OR Shallow (10-20”)

- 1. Soils very shallow (<10”), but may include areas of exposed bedrock and pockets of deep soil, often on steep (up to 55%) south and west facing slopes with VERY LOW productivity potential.....2
 - 2. Bedrock igneous or volcanic, three-tip sagebrush and black sage common shrubs.....**Igneous (Ig)**
 - 2. Fracture bedrock of various types except igneous or volcanic, commonly on windswept ridges, bluebunch wheatgrass, bitterbrush and a variety of shrub species dominate..... **Very Shallow (VS)**
- 1. Soils shallow (10-20”), but may include moderately deep to deep gravelly or cobbly soils, soils with a root restrictive layer, and/or south and west facing slopes that react like shallow soils, productivity potential is LOW.....3
 - 3. Coarse fragments common on surface and throughout profile (>35% by volume in top 20”), low sagebrush and bitterbrush common shrubs..... **Stony (St)**
 - 3. Soils without high amount of coarse fragments4

- 4. Medium to moderately coarse textured soils over igneous or volcanic bedrock, bitterbrush and three-tip sagebrush common**Shallow Igneous (SwI)**
- 4. Very fine sandy loam to clay loam textured soils over various bedrock types (commonly limestone, siltstone, or shale), low sagebrush intermixed with big sagebrush**Shallow Loamy (SwLy)**

GROUP III – Upland Sites that are Moderately Deep to Deep (>20”)

- 1. Sites with a high volume of coarse fragments in top 20” (>35% by volume)....2
 - 2. Site occurs in a variety of upland positions, boulders found in abundance on surface, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, spike fescue, bitterbrush, and big sage common, productivity high**Coarse Upland (CU)**
 - 2. Site occurs on steep south and west facing mountain slopes, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, and spike fescue dominant grasses, mountain mahogany common shrub.....**Steep Stony (SSt)**
- 1. Sites without high volume of coarse fragments.....3
 - 3. Soil textures are heavy, slight to severe soil cracking in dry conditions low sagebrush and green rabbitbrush common shrubs.....**Dense Clay (DC)**
 - 3. Soils very fine sandy loams to clay loams, a good variety and even mix of grass species, mountain big sagebrush dominant shrub..... **Loamy (Ly)**
 - 4. Site occurs on steep north and east facing mountain slopes, mixed mountain shrub community often with aspen**Steep Loamy (Sly)**
 - 4. Soils very fine sandy loams to clay loams, a good variety and even mix of grass species, mountain big sagebrush dominant shrub.....**Loamy (Ly)**